US threat to pull out of LCA Project

1377. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USA has threatened to pull out of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) project;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is its likely impact on the LCA projects stating the manner in which Government proposes to continue the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No, Sir. The progress on the agreement with US Government for co-operation in the LCA project in terms of laboratory-to-laboratory interaction in technology and commercial needs for the project has been satisfactory.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Induction of MBT Arjun

1378. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that induction of the indigenously developed main battle tank (MBT) into service is becoming doubtful even though it had been cleared for production;

(b) if so, what are the major reasons raising doubt and uncertainty about its induction into service; and

(c) what are the possibilities of its induction in the army?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Army has already given its in-principle acceptance for induction of Main Battle Tank ARJUN for service-use. Further exploitation trials by the troops on pre-production series ARJUN tank are in progress. The tank is expected to be productionised as soon as final go-ahead is given by the Army on completion of these trials.

Condition imposed on woman pilots IAF

1379. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some women pilots have been recruited in Indian Air Force;

(b) whether any specific service conditions/training conditions were imposed only on the women pilots if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether these conditions are also prevailing in other nations; and

(d) if not, what is the specific reasons for imposing such conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir. Women pilots have been recruited in the IAF from 1993 onwards. This scheme is on an experimental basis for 3 years, subject to a review thereafter.

(b) There is no difference in service and training conditions between male and female candidates of similar entry for induction as pilots in IAF.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.